

THE GREAT PRIZE FIGHT.

Referee Siler Sends Copies of the Rules Under Which It is to be Fought to the Principals—His Warnings as to Foul Play—How the Men Receive His Decisions.

Carson, Nev., March 10.—The most delicate subject in connection with the big fight was broached today when Referee Geo. Siler submitted to Corbett and Fitzsimmons his interpretation of the Queensberry rules. Siler's communication, which was in the nature of a formal letter, was not received with manifestations of joy at either camp. The big fellows read their letters thoughtfully and reserved judgment. If Siler had any doubts as to the propriety of his action in outlining his views at this time, they must be dissipated now. The fighters could never have agreed upon the rules after entering the ring. Each man appears to be playing possum just now and waiting for the other to commit himself. It is not unwise, however, to predict that a conference between Siler, Stuart and the representatives of the principals will be necessary before the matter of rules is finally settled.

Mr. Siler's letter, which was handed to the pugilists shortly after noon, read as follows:

"Carson City, Nevada, March 10.
 "To James J. Corbett, Esq., and Robert Fitzsimmons, Esq., Carson City, Nev.:
 "Gentlemen:—Herewith I hand you each the rules of the Marquis of Queensberry, under the provisions of which you are to contest for the heavyweight championship of the world in this city on March 17, 1897. Accompanying the rules are some suggestions and instructions. These are based upon careful study, research and fairness. You are principals to what will be the greatest contest of modern times. You have both trained carefully and assiduously. The principals and public are alike engrossed to an extent never before made manifest in a like encounter. While it is a departure to give instruction to contestants in a battle like this a week in advance of the meeting, I think that the importance of the fight fully warrants this move. I am confident that you both want to win solely and wholly on your merits. Neither of you can afford to have the slightest suspicion of doubt cloud the title which will belong to the victor. To that end, I herewith hand you the rules and certain interpretations under which you are to battle:

"Rule 1. To be a fair, stand-up boxing match in a twenty-four foot ring, or as near that as is practicable.

"Rule 2. No wrestling or hugging allowed.

"Rule 3. The rounds to be of three minutes duration, and one minute between rounds.

"Rule 4. If either man fall through weakness or otherwise, he must get up unassisted, ten seconds to be allowed him to do so, the other man meanwhile to return to his corner, and when the fallen man is on his legs, the round is to be resumed and continued until the three minutes have expired. If one man fails to come to the scratch in the ten seconds allowed, it shall be in the power of the referee to give his award in favor of the other man.

"Rule 5. A man hanging on the ropes in a helpless state with his toes off the ground, shall be considered down.

"Rule 6. No seconds or any other person to be allowed in the ring during the rounds.

"Rule 7. Should the contest be stopped by and unavoidable interference the referee to name time and place, as soon as possible, for finishing the contest so that the winner must be won or lost, unless the backers of both men agree to draw the stakes.

"Rule 8. The gloves to be fair-sized boxing gloves of the best quality and new.

"Rule 9. Should a glove burst or come off, it must be repaired to the referee's satisfaction.

"Rule 10. One man on one knee is considered down, and if struck the man is entitled to the stakes.

"Rule 11. No shoes or boots with springs allowed.

"Rule 12. The contest in all other respects to be governed by the revised rules of the London prize ring.

"Rule 13, which says: 'The contest in all other respects to be governed by the revised rules of the London prize ring,' is, I consider one of the most important of the twelve rules, and appears to be the bone of contention in almost every contest. It has been thrust on all referees, myself among them, to inquire of the principles whether they choose to hit in clinches with one arm free and also on break-aways. Invariably the principle has been to hit in clinches, or on break-aways but they generally forget all about their agreement and frequently violate it.

This, then, causes not only their seconds, but the spectators to cry foul every time a blow is delivered in a clinch or on a break-away, and causes much trouble and argument. It also makes the duties of a referee arduous and disagreeable and keeps him continually in a state of nervous tension. It gives the referee an opportunity to decide a contest on a technical foul, which is generally unsatisfactory to everybody concerned. Neither of you, I am sure, desire to win the coming contest on a technical foul, and to avoid such contingency, through hitting in clinches with a free arm and break-aways, I will rule: That you be permitted to hit in clinches with one arm free and also on break-aways. With this understanding, I have announced a week before the contest, you will both have time to practice this important point and will have no cause for complaint should either of you be caught off your guard. Foul blows, missing with either hand and whipping back with the elbow, meeting an opponent with or deliberately striking him with the elbow or knee, are barred and will be considered foul. Should any of the above blows have any material effect on the result of the contest I shall use my judgment accordingly.

"Should any of the seconds of the principals enter the ring during a round to render any assistance to the fighters or prevent them from committing a foul, or to throw water on them it shall be deemed a foul.

"Coaching by seconds during the rounds is objectionable to everybody and is apt to create discord and argument. Both of you have undoubtedly mapped out your plans of attack and defense, and need no advice from your respective seconds. The latter will therefore refrain from making any comment during the contest.

"Trivial fouls may be unintentionally committed by either of you but unless they have a direct bearing on the result they will be overlooked by me in my discretion.

"This, I believe, covers all the important points. Both of you are thoroughly acquainted with the Marquis of Queensberry rules not touched upon by me and I hope to see you both live strictly up to them. With a fair field, no favors, no prejudices, I remain,

Very truly yours,

"GEORGE SILER, Referee."

Fitzsimmons was the first to receive his copy. Under the advice of Martin

Julian he declined to say a word. "The less you say now, Bob," the less you may have to regret," was Julian's advice. "There's time enough to discuss this matter before next Wednesday. Speaking for Fitzsimmons and myself, I'm not prepared to say that the rules please us, but I do not think it is entirely satisfactory. We have everything at stake in this fight, and I will not take the chance of injuring Bob's prospects by jumping at conclusions too hastily. We will come out with an expression in a day or two, after we have thought the question over carefully."

It was evident from Julian's manner that he intended probing the wood pile carefully for "niggers" before making up his mind. Fitzsimmons took the situation gravely and never opened his mouth.

When Corbett's letter was placed in his hands he retired to a quiet corner and perused it through carefully. "I think I had better sleep on this," he concluded, "before giving out my opinion. I always respected Siler's judgment, and do so now, but you can't tell what holes you may find in a thing until you look it over carefully. I want to handle this matter thyselves, and I may thoroughly understand it. De-lancy, White and I will read the letter over tonight and go through every clause piece-meal. Just now I would rather be excused from making any comments on it. All I want is an even break, and we are certain to get it from Siler. It's the best, though, that we should have a clear understanding of the rules before hand."

In the opinion of many sporting authorities, the time-honored rules are in for a threshing. It is not believed that Siler's dissertation will be swallowed as it stands, and a joint conference of those most interested is more than probable.

Dan Stuart will call upon Corbett and Fitzsimmons tomorrow if the weather continues favorable. He walked about for several hours today and his face is beginning to show some color.

Nothing remains to be done at the arena except to put up the private boxes. This work is only a matter of a few hours. The seats will be numbered and the sections placarded during the present week, when the gates of the enclosure will be closed to the public.

THE BACK TAX MATTER.

Wilmington Knocked Out of Thousands of Dollars by the Repeal of the Act Providing for the Collection of Arrears of Taxes—Relief for 1,500 to 2,000 People.

The Messenger yesterday published the statement that the general assembly on the eve of its adjournment passed an act repealing chapter 182 of the acts of 1895, providing for the collection of arrears of taxes due the city of Wilmington. There was, of course, much rejoicing among a large number of our people who owe these back taxes, but others who pay their taxes and have borne the burden of taxation are greatly disgusted over the matter. There are about \$130,000 in taxes due the city, running back for a period of ten to twenty years, in most cases ten years, and due by from 1,500 to 2,000 people.

We learn that to Colonel R. B. Davis belongs the credit of getting the repealing act through the general assembly. The friends of the measure resent the statement that the bill was "sneaked through." We learn that Senator George H. Cannon, the representative of New Hanover and Brunswick counties in the senate, reported the bill favorably from the committee on propositions and grievances, and that it passed the house of representatives about two weeks ago and the senate last Tuesday. In the house of representatives Col. Jno. L. Cunningham, of Person county, had charge of the bill, and Senator George E. Butler, of Sampson county, steered it in the senate. It is said Representative D. B. Sutton was in the house when the repealing bill passed and it was gotten through without his knowledge. It is said he was terribly upset over the revelation that it had passed and been ratified, and that Governor Russell was in a very bad humor over it.

There was much dissatisfaction here over the severity of the act providing for the collection of the back taxes, and the act repealing it is even gratifying to many who would like to have seen the taxes collected. They disapproved of the measure, and one factor in the dissatisfaction was that it is stated that the lawyers who were appointed to collect the taxes would have been paid \$40,000 for their share.

A Messenger reporter last evening asked John D. Bellamy, Esq., what would be the effect upon the judgment given in the case before the recent term of the superior court. Out of the numerous cases for back taxes only one so far has been disposed of and that case was carried on appeal by the defendants to the supreme court.

Mr. Bellamy states that in all probability the judgment will not be pressed, and that it is believed that the repealing act will be a bar to all the other cases that have not been disposed of.

A Sad Death.

One of the saddest deaths that we have been called upon to chronicle for a long time was that of Thomas Cowan James, son of Mr. T. C. James, of this city, a brief announcement of which appeared in our paper yesterday. He was a youth of uncommon promise, studious, intelligent and remarkably well read for one of his age. He delighted in books, and while others of his age were indulging in the outdoor sports incident to boyish life, he preferred the quiet of his home and the companionship of some favorite author.

He had noble qualities and was a very lovable character. He was truthful, amiable and always ready to oblige any who might need his services and was gifted with far more than ordinary intelligence and would doubtless have made a name for himself in the republic of letters had he lived to manhood.

A crushing blow has fallen upon his family and friends, and the sympathy of the community goes out to them in full measure under this unexpected and agonizing affliction. The ways of providence are too mysterious for mortal ken to fathom, but we know that "he doeth all things well," and with the affliction will give strength to comfort and sustain. He alone can give peace to the troubled soul.

ACTS OF THE LEGISLATURE.

Captions of Laws Enacted and Ratified at the Session Just Closed.

Messenger Bureau, Park Hotel, Raleigh, N. C., March 11.

From March 8th to 10th, both inclusive, the following bills were ratified and are now laws:

To provide for additional county commissioners.

To amend charter of St. Augustine's school, Raleigh.

To repeal chapter 380, public laws 1895. For relief of commissioners of Surry.

To create a board to control Mecklenburg convicts.

To incorporate Callettsville.

To incorporate the New Hanover Society for the Prevention of Crime.

To incorporate Duplin and Wayne Railroad and Lumber Company.

To regulate sale of liquors in Union.

To protect fish and game in Rockingham.

To allow Duplin to levy a special tax.

To appropriate \$4,000 additional to colored convicts and surveyors.

To amend code as to appeal from assignments of widows' years' support.

To amend chapter 350, public laws, Washington county.

To renew chapter 350, acts 1891.

To provide for a sawtooth river.

To create a public school district of the town of Rockingham.

To give additional time of meeting to Forsyth's commissioners.

To incorporate Tar River and Carolina Railroad.

To amend charter of Matthews.

To repeal chapter 335, acts 1891.

To repeal chapter 238, acts 1889.

To amend charter of Carthage.

To incorporate Excelsior Artesian Well and Sewerage Company.

To amend section 1, chapter 35, public laws 1895.

To give charge of public printing to the governor's council.

To provide for the election of tax collector for Mecklenburg.

To amend chapter 301, acts 1895.

To protect partridges and squirrels in Pasquotank.

To incorporate Davis Educational Union.

To protect deer in certain counties.

To amend the Farmers' Mutual Fire Insurance Company from tax.

To establish a free school district on the line between Guilford, Forsyth and Davidson.

To aid public schools in Tyrrell.

To amend the Mecklenburg road law.

To put the Guilford and Cleveland in the Seventh and Yadkin and Davis in the Eighth congressional district.

To amend laws as to cotton and peanut weavers in Edgecombe.

To incorporate Red Springs seminary.

To allow Polk county to hold a local option election.

To protect land owners in Chatham from hunters.

To protect travelers on public roads from barbed-wire fences.

To amend charter of Burlington.

To amend charter of Moore County and Western Railroad Company.

To amend charter of Monroe.

To reduce price for weighing cotton.

To induce tax payers of Hyde.

To amend charter of Columbus, Polk county.

To amend charter of Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

To reduce fees for impounding stock in Edgecombe.

To amend section 262 of the code.

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To amend the charter of Asheville.

To allow Bladen to settle with sureties of ex-Treasurer Benson.

To incorporate the Scotland Neck training and industrial school in Dare.

To better protect wild fowl in Dare.

For relief of Sheriff H. C. Kearney, of Franklin.

To forbid hunting in Person by nonresidents.

To require railroad companies to redeem unused mileage tickets.

To amend charter of Dunn.

To validate marriage of A. G. Bauer in Cross Creek township, Cumberland county.

To prohibit stock running at large in Cross Creek township, Cumberland county.

To encourage local taxation for public schools.

To extend charter of Marion and Red Springs Railroad Company.

To regulate fire insurance rates in North Carolina.

To build a road through state lands from Riverdale to Stella.

To extend Maxton's limits.

To incorporate Swain county high school.

To pension 134 Confederate soldiers, reported by pension committee.

To amend laws in the construction of the Winston-Salem Southbound Railroad (2nd) convicts and surveyors.

To amend stock law of Randolph.

To permit establishment of public libraries.

To amend chapter 183, printed laws 1895.

To provide for working public roads in Hertford.

To state treasurer to pay appropriations semi-annually or quarterly.

To allow Asheville to collect arrears of taxes.

To allow Yancey to work convicts on roads.

To provide for the working of the public roads in Greene, Wayne and Wayne.

To declare Cape Fear and Little rivers, in Harnett county, lawful fences.

To amend charter of Fayetteville and Albemarle Railroad Company.

To allow Tyrrell to settle debt and levy special tax to build bridges.

To amend laws in the construction of the Winston-Salem Southbound Railroad (2nd) convicts and surveyors.

To amend the road law by allowing use of state convicts between July 15th and 1st of August.

To build roads through public lands in Onslow.

To amend chapter 183, public laws 1895.

To allow Mitchell to levy special tax.

To amend charter of Teachey.

To incorporate Central industrial school, at Lenoir county.

To protect mocking birds.

For relief of Cumberland county.

To incorporate the Littleton.

To allow Greensboro to issue bonds.

To incorporate Snow Hill Railroad Company.

To incorporate town of Mayville.

To give Sanford township, Moore county, the alternative road law.

To incorporate the two literary societies in Shaw university.

To extend the Raleigh road limit.

To amend laws in the construction of the Winston-Salem Southbound Railroad (2nd) convicts and surveyors.

To keep Mitchell's roads in order.

To incorporate Bricklayers Brotherhood, of Wilmington.

To provide for working of public roads in Wilcox.

To work the roads in Northampton by taxation.

To amend charter of Jacksonville.

To provide \$5,000 additional to colored agricultural and mechanical college.

To protect wild fowl in Hyde.

To extend time of organization of Bank of Maxton.

To forbid adulteration of spirits of turpentine with kerosene oil.

To authorize Charlotte to acquire real estate for better protection of its water and sewerage systems.

To make an itemized statement, of account, properly verified, prima facie evidence of its correctness.

To protect convicts on the roads in Caldwell.

To protect fishing machines in Roanoke river.

To repeal chapter 231, public laws 1895.

To incorporate the Underwriters Insurance Company, of Goldsboro.

To incorporate the colored grand lodge of Masons.

To forbid hunting by nonresidents in Camden.

To incorporate the Liberal, Industrial and Agricultural Institute of Elizabeth City.

To allow Jackson county to levy special tax.

To fix fees of treasurer of Harnett.

For relief of Lexington, allowing it exemption from payment of railway bonds.

To establish Hudson township, Caldwell county.

To amend charter of Victoria, Buncombe county.

For relief of ex-Sheriff Greenwood, of Wilkes.

To allow convict "trustys" in Cabarrus.

To protect educational institutions from disorderly persons.

To levy special tax in stock law territory in Nash.

LEE ASKED TO STAY.

Sherman Tells Him It Will Be a Personal Favor to McKinley—Promises to Sustain Him—His Official Demand to Be Backed Up by the Government—Question of Keeping a Warship at Havana to Be Considered.

(New York World.)

Washington, March 9.—Secretary Sherman cabled to Consul General Lee today that every reasonable demand or request he may make of the Spanish authorities in Cuba will be supported by all the power of the United States government.

The first dispatch received by the new secretary of state from General Lee, outside of the ordinary routine, came yesterday. It was brief and simple, asking what he could expect in the way of being relieved from further service at Havana, and calling attention to a desire heretofore expressed that he might be permitted to return home.

Secretary Sherman took the dispatch to the executive mansion afterwards, and cabled to General Lee requesting him to continue at his post, explaining that no one has been selected as his successor, and it would be inconvenient to consider that matter for some time. He was assured of fair treatment by the new administration, and told that his remaining as consul general would be regarded by the president as a personal favor.

General Lee cabled today that he had found it not only difficult, but at times impossible, to furnish American citizens with a degree of protection to which he felt them entitled. He has often been humiliated in the attempted discharge of his duties. As now situated he cannot obtain such recognition as he desires from the Spanish authorities, and thus his usefulness is impaired. He suggested that a United States warship in the harbor of Havana would be of the greatest assistance to him.

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